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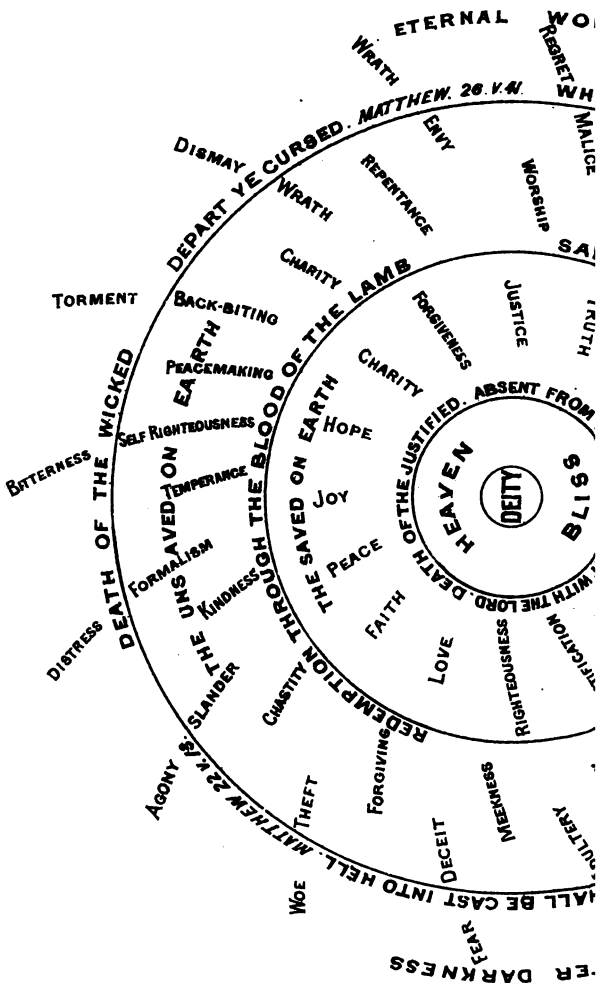
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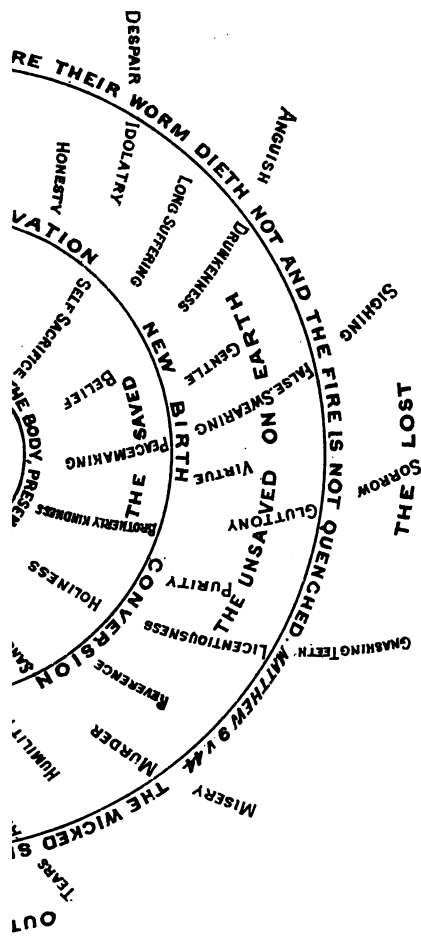
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1881

LIFE
AND TRUTH

A SCRIPTURE CHART.





The first line represents a sinners death—
 (Beyond the outer darkness, endless woe)—
 The second, pardon through a Saviours blood :
 The third, the death of all the justified :
 The centre, Deity in highest heaven.
 The spaces give four very different states :
 The lost, unsaved, redeemed, and truly blessed.
 Three short steps which are oft' passed rapidly,
 Cross o'er the narrow lines, from space to space :
 From Earth to Hell, from Sin to Holiness,
 And from a life of faith to heavenly peace.



LIFE AND TRUTH;

ALSO

A Scripture Chart,

LIFE OR DEATH.



"CHOOSE YE THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE."

"THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH, BUT THE GIFT OF
GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE."



[AND.]

LONDON:

BIBLE CHRISTIAN BOOK ROOM, 26, PATERNOSTER ROW

1861.

INSTRUCTIONS.



A SINGLE glance will shew to every man
His true position in the sight of God.
A good or bad tree yields the special fruit,
By which 'tis known ; search then your character.
Are you unsaved ? with evil tendencies,
Condemned of conscience, and a guilty heart ?
Consider, God is greater, and knows all ;
And will by no means clear the guilty ones.
For them remains a fearful day of wrath,
Of horror, darkness, and the second death.
But some rejoice : have passed from death to life,
Have washed their robes in blood, and made them white.
To them remains no condemnation : they
Abound in every Christ-like work of grace,
Shall hear with rapture their Redeemer's voice,—
“ Come hither, blessed of my Father, come !
Inherit heavenly joys prepared for you.”
Remember though, vice draws down souls to death—
Away from God ; that virtues cannot win
Eternal bliss ; for see, the diagram
Shews many beauteous characters unsaved ;
And God Himself has fixed these boundaries.
“ By deeds of law shall none be justified ; ”

INSTRUCTIONS.

"He that hath Christ," He saith, "alone hath life;"
"The wicked shall be cast down into hell,
With all the nations that forget their God."
Yet God delights not in a sinner's death,
The Gospel trumpet still proclaims, "There's room!"
As long as life's frail, flickering flame shall burn,
The vilest wretch who breathes may still return.
Let him but cast himself as one undone,
In faith, before the cross, and Heaven is won.
The promise runs—to "Whosoever will
But stoop and drink, shall flow the sacred rill."
And further, Jesus, to quell ev'ry doubt,
Cries, "No one coming shall be e'er cast out!"



LIFE AND TRUTH.

—:O:—

THE object of this little work is to attract forcibly the attention of the young to the importance of religion through the uncertainty of life.

To explain some of the difficulties in doctrine.

To answer objections and doubts.

To confirm the Christian in his most holy faith.

A peculiar style has been selected, in order to create interest, and ensure serious reflections.



LIFE AND TRUTH.



“ In the midst of life, we are in death.”

YES, I was spared, when in that awful night
So many souls were called to meet their doom.
Some well prepared, filled with a holy faith,
Trusting and resting, in the precious blood
Of Him, who died to rescue them from hell :
Whilst others, careless, in a moment passed
Into the presence of their angry Judge.
To all came suddenly the fearful cry,
“ Come forth, ye mortals, and approach your God.”
The day was bright, was beautiful, and calm ;
All hearts were happy, and the fresh’ning breeze
Seemed to impart new life to every face.
The mother, with her smiling babe in arms,
And older children clust’ring at her side,
Watched with delight the busy scenes of life—
The varied labours by the river’s side.
A day like *this*, a day of rest, and joy,
Was bliss to think upon, for weeks before :

And now, the little prattling ones, o'erpowered
With so much novelty, and so much life,
Dance in an ecstasy of full delight.
Yonder, another group of tender girls—
Teacher and pupils of a Sunday School—
Rejoice in this, their summer holiday.
On other side, enveloped in her wraps,
(Although the day is genial and warm,)
Reclines the pale young invalid ; the wife
Of yonder clergyman, whose anxious face
Tells of the sorrow which afflicts his heart :
The loving partner of his fondest hopes
Is with'ring, like a rosebud, in his grasp.
He knows that Heaven has claimed *her* for its own,
Yet dreams not of the pure ecstatic joy
Which waits him—that without a parting here
He, with the priceless treasure of his heart,
Shall glide into the haven of the bless'd.
See, with what tender care he watches o'er
Her ev'ry look, drinks in each whispered word !
The boat is full to-day, the glorious morn
Of radiant sunshine, after days of storm,
Has tempted many to old Father Thames,
And makes the excursion one of hearty joy.
The day has passed without a single shower :
And now, returning as the night draws on,
The harp and fiddle strike a lively tune ;
Whilst some light-hearted ones, so full of mirth.
Burst forth in snatches of delighted song,
As others trip it lightly o'er the deck,

Without a thought of danger, or of grief.
But, hark ! those sounds are not the words of peace ;
A sudden discord strikes upon the ear :
A group of workmen, late from yonder stage,
Are quarelling, and even come to blows ;
(Too evidently all have deeply drank,)
And now, with horrid and blaspheming oaths,
In high-pitched tones, they mar the gen'ral peace.
Cigar in hand, I sat above the wheel,
Watching the various groups, now thickly set ;—
The children weary, snuggling, half asleep ;—
The youths and maidens lost in sweet converse.
The fair young invalid has gone below,
Her loving partner fears the evening air
May prove too chill for his poor drooping flower.
The night grows darker : and the lights on shore,
Now grouped in clusters, now with space between,
Seemed but to cast our path in deeper shade ;
Whilst all around was silent, save the splash
Our vessel made in driving through the wave.

THE SHOCK.

A sudden cry ! and turning round, I saw
As if a mountain, lofty, vast, and dark,
Was falling on us with volcanic force.
No time for thought ; with one tremendous crash
Our boat was shivered ; into atoms dashed,
As the black monster madly strode across
The very centre of our fated ship
Dealing destruction, stamping all to death.

Oh shall I e'er forget that awful cry !
That cry of horror, anguish, and despair,
Which, loud as thunder rose, and rent the heavens
As many hundreds tossed into the waves
Battled for life ? alas, for most how vain !
Oh scene of woe too horrible to tell,
What pen *can* picture forth that awful time,
When in a moment, life and joy, and peace,
Were turned to death, destruction and despair ?
Many were crushed or stunned, and so sank down
Resistless victims, to th' engulfing waves :
Others, dragged down, clutched in their agony
By those around ; all vainly strove for life.
The boldest swimmer 'midst that surging mass
Felt his arms tied, and ev'ry effort void.
The luckless babe, dashed from its mother's breast,
Is whirled along and hidden 'midst the foam.
The fair young children—where, alas ! are they ?
Scattered or crushed, they sink before the eyes
Of their fond parent ; with what anguish torn
She casts her arms up heavenward—ere she sinks.
But still they're safe ; the Lord our Shepherd's there,
Gath'ring the tender lambs into His fold ;
And ere she dies these words salute her ears
" Fear not ! fear not ! for I am with thee still.
Faithful to death, and then the crown of life
Waits thee and thine, where partings are no more."
Some ropes are thrown ; a few strong men are saved ;
But where is now that group of tender girls—
The gentle teacher and her loving class ?

The Lord, they loved, has called them to himself;
A few faint strugglings midst the surging waves,
And angels bear them to the bliss of heaven.
Oh contrast terrible; those wild, mad forms,
Battling the waves with curses on their lips,
Sobered at length to face the pangs of death,
Are hurried to the awful judgement seat
Of Him, whose name, though dying they blaspheme.

ESCAPE.

How I escaped the fury of that charge,
Which hurled me helpless from my lofty seat,
And cast me headlong deep into the stream,
My tongue and mem'ry fail me now to tell;
But of thy thoughts and feelings, oh my soul,
Which rushed like torrents madly through my mind,
Whilst life shall last—until my latest breath—
Not one shall vanish, though my days outlast
The ripe old age of four score years and ten.
It was not fear, although I could not swim.
Death in itself, I did not seem to dread;
But in my ears there roared the yell of fiends,
And hands unseen, appeared to drag me down;
Whilst in their taunting cries I heard my doom—
“Too late, too late, the hour of grace is past;
Nought but eternity of dark despair,
Of woe unending, bitterness, remorse
Remains for thee; without *one* ray of hope,
Torments beyond the power of thought to grasp,
Anguish unutterable, without a break,

And this, the sharpest sting of all the rest,
That thou hast wrought this ruin for thyself,
Mercy was offered : richest mercy, free,
But thou would'st none of it, and so fell doomed ;
Thyself the murd'rer of thy guilty soul."

REMORSE.

Then, o'er my mind, the mem'ry of the past
Rushed as an avalanche ; each hideous sin,
Buried in deep oblivion, rose to light :
And, like a flood of scorpions—fiery-tongued—
My past transgressions with their poisonous fangs
Seized on my anguished and polluted heart ;
But in that moment, which appeared an age,
As all my life's years passed in retrospect,
I seemed to hear my sainted mother's prayer ;
And thought of him, who though upon a cross
Expiring justly for his deeds of blood,
Yet craved for mercy, and at once found grace—
Not *pardon* only—but a *welcome* home ;
A wondrous trophy of our dying Lord !
"Saviour," I cried, "I cast myself on Thee ;
I feel my sin ; I know that Thou art just
In hurling me for ever from Thy sight
Into the horrors of the dark abyss.
But Thou, whose pity saved the dying thief,
Canst stoop and sprinkle now Thy blood on me."
He heard my prayer, and o'er me dawned such peace,
A rapture, glorious, unspeakable !
All darkness fled ; and, with a cry of rage,
The demons rushed to clutch some other prey.

REFLECTION.

When I revived, I found me in a boat ;
But *how* I 'scaped where numbers sank to death,
I ne'er could tell : but soon as strength returned,
My heart poured forth its thankfulness and praise
To Him, whose love not only granted life,
But in that moment washed my sins away.
I felt that I no longer was my own,
But His, who bought me with His precious blood.
Oh, Sov'reign mercy ! thus to spare and save
A life like mine, so worthless, and so vile ;
Whilst many a bright and noble character
Sank in the gulf, to wake in life no more.
And e'er since then, as I have watched and prayed,
A gracious light has broken o'er my mind,
Chasing away the dark and gloomy shades
Of doubt and ignorance ; much that before
Was mystery, and fed my unbelief,
Now in His love my Father hath revealed ;
Filling my soul with such adoring peace,
And with such rapture as the trav'ler feels,
Who, late his thirst assuaged on burning plains,
Calls out in ecstasy, " Come, drink, and live !
Here is the fountain ! " so I now to Christ,
The living water, would hail ev'ry soul
I now meet, wand'ring, faint, and near to death.
" Sinners," I cry, " a moment give me ear ;
I know your thoughts, for I was such as you.
Buoyant with health, strong in the powers of youth,
Heedless of all beyond the passing hour,

Thinking but little of the life to come,
Or when the Unseen world would claim a thought,
I cried, 'There's time enough to dwell on that
When age comes on, when hoary hairs appear.'
But all those victims, from their watery grave ;
The tender maidens, and the vig'rous youths ;
The gentle father, in his manhood's prime ;
And blooming children, full of life and health,
Cry with one voice of warning earnestness,
'Delay no longer to make peace with God.'
'Thou know'st not what to-morrow may bring forth,
If thou *art* spared to see the morrow's sun !' "

A WARNING.

A dozen years have scarcely passed, since I
Was witness of a similar scene of woe,
Of dire destruction, desolation, death ;
So sad, so fearful, that my heart was chilled ;
So sudden, dreadful, that you fain might deem
It was the judgment of avenging Heaven.
A London youth had tempted from her home
A gentle maiden ; promised her to wed :
And so she leaves behind her sunny home—
The happy refuge of her childhood's days—
Regardless of the woe her parents feel ;
The grief, the terrors, which afflict their hearts.
I chanced to stand long waiting for a train
At a large junction, where with lightning pace
The through trains rattled, like a thunder clap ;
Scarce comes a rush of air, and then they're gone.

Yonder, a train from London to the North
Draws up, on further side, and waits awhile,
As trucks with goods for branches are removed.
I watched a youth descending from the car
Seeking refreshment, pushing now his way
Amidst the surging crowd ;—the platform's full
Of bustling trav'lers, rushing here and there.
A fair young face watches with anxious gaze,
Fearing to hear the whistle's shrilly blast—
The call to motion—ere he can return.
But who can tell the woe—the dire dismay—
A day, an hour, a moment, may bring forth ?
A sudden shock, as of a great earthquake,
A cry, a crash, a cloud of steam and dust,
And nought remains of all those carriages
But shapeless heaps of ruin and despair.
One engine crushed has torn and left the rails ;
A tender rearing stands upon its end ;
The vast *débris* of wheels, and twisted planks,
Cast here and there, shows all that now remains
Of many vehicles ; but where are they—
The luckless passengers, who in their seats
Met the full brunt of this resistless force ?
Oh, scene of agony ! of pain ! of death !
I will not dwell upon the said details.
My purpose here is only to record
The woe which fell on that misguided pair ;
She, in the fulness of her youth, her sin,
Was crushed, and hurled into eternity :
No time for thought, and scarcely for a prayer.

He rushes forth, risking both life and limb
In reckless agony ; climbing the wreck ;
Working with giant force to liberate
The dead and dying from the impris'ning heap.
" Oh, where art thou," he cries, " my love, my life ?
Speak, or my heart by anguish torn will burst."
In vain now I and others would restrain
His mad career, striving to pacify,
Fearing his brain would reel beneath the shock
Of that we feared was now inevitable.
Still on he rushes, dashing here and there,
As hope or fancy prompted. I behind
Followed closely, to afford what aid
There yet was room for, but without a hope
Of finding her he sought possessing life.
At length some trifling article appears
To fix attention ; he has recognized
That which identifies. *Identifies !*
Oh, how can I appropriate that word
To that inert and shapeless mass of clay,
Crushed, out of form, dismembered limb from limb ?
Oh ! speechless horror ; see, he falls, he raves,
Falls and embraces that, (so lovely once,)
Now fearful, loathsome, indescribable,
One dreadful shriek, and then a maniac laugh,
And tottering reason flies before the shock.
Force then was used his madness to restrain,
But just in time, to save from suicide,
Oh ! who could gaze upon this tragedy
With heart unmoved ? without a serious thought—

A thought upon th' uncertainty of life ?
Oh ! ponder sinner, for one moment think
What were *thy* fate, if judgment closed thy days
With some such sudden, startling accident.
Dwell on the sentence which would greet thy ears,
"Depart ye cursed to eternal woe,"—
Partner with devils in their dread despair.

IMPORTANT TRUTHS.

Now, by the aid of the Almighty God,
His Spirit guiding me, I would unfold
Some simple truths, but yet deep mysteries ;
In childlike words setting salvation forth,
With homelike illustrations, gathered up
From the wise lips of saints now glorified.

THE INFIDEL.

First, let us dwell upon the infidel :
One who denies the existence of a God,
One who believes,—at least he tells us so—
In no hereafter, nothing past the grave ;
That here begins, and here our being ends ;
Annihilation, or eternal sleep
Following on death, as to the soulless beast.

Stop ! for a moment, try to realise
And grasp, if possible, a faint idea
Of being nowhere, ceasing to exist,
Not in the body, but in self, in soul ;
Pass in imagination through the pangs—

The throes of death ; the body's swift decay,
And crumbling into dust and nothingness.

This we can picture, feel, as probable.

But when we touch upon the *inner life*,

The *I myself*, the thought will still arise

Of being somewhere ; nor, with all its powers

Can the mind realise, or e'en conceive

Of its cessation ; test this for thyself.

NO GOD.

The fool in heart has said, "There is no God,"

And strives to feel, and prove, that this is truth.

But watch in danger, mark him in distress,

Stand by his dying couch, and note him then,

And you will find a dread of the Unknown

Racking his soul with fearful agony.

His boasted firmness and profoundest themes

Forsake him in his hour of direst need,

Whilst hell's reality, with awful force

Crushes his spirit with tormenting fears ;

Then will the dread of an offended God

Reverse conclusions of a lifetime past.

The love of sin produces hate to God,

And so would banish Him ; and had he power

The crim'nal would annihilate the judge,

And then run riot into deeper depths ;

As 'tis he madly from His presence flies

And His existence proudly would assert

To be th' imagination of a priest.

IS THERE NO GOD ?

Now ev'ry nation, ev'ry savage tribe
Since time began, throughout the universe
Has felt impelled to worship ; felt the need
Of rites performed which should propitiate
Some power unseen, who ruling over all,
Had strength to kill, and might to keep alive.

GOD IN NATURE.

Look forth on Nature : see her beauteous forms,—
Her great varieties of loveliness.
The glorious sun, a giant in his course ;
The moon, fulfilling her appointed days ;
The stars, like jewels in her coronet,
Countless in number, but in order true ;
Revolving in their orbits pre-ordained.
Now turn to earth, and view each ocean wave,
Like foaming war-horse rushing to the charge,
As if they fain would swallow up the shore.
But no, a rein is thrown across their necks,
A force restrains them, and they turn their heads,
And bow before a Power Omnipotent.
Watch next the fields ; the winter's come and gone,
The ice dissolved, the snow-flakes fled away ;
The sun peeps forth, and by his genial warmth
Dead seeds are quickened into verdant life,
And bare boughs blossom into flower and fruit.
Think now of self, consider what man is,
How wonderful, how delicately framed ;
A mere volition trav'ling from the brain

Runs through each nerve, gives motion to each limb.
Then with what harmony the various parts
Fulfil their mission ; gaining health and strength
From food digested, and from air inhaled.
All these are facts, but O, what mysteries
Lurk here concealed, what wisdom planned the whole !
Now, who can gaze on all these glorious acts,
And dare deny the Maker of them all ?
Or, who so foolish as to deem such works
Were self-producers, the results of chance ?

THE DEITY.

Thus after proof we own a Deity ;
One who in nature must be far above
All things created ; who must differ too
Vastly from man e'en in his best estate ;
Yea, we to Him must yield such attributes
As shall exceed our powers to contemplate ;
But He this knowledge must reveal to us,
These hidden glories man could ne'er trace out,
With all his boasted wisdom ; yea, so dark
His mind, and ignorant, that he thought his God
Was moved by passions evil as his own.

REVELATION.

Then Heaven in mercy sent a ray of light,
Through men inspired, who taught the will of God.
And all that it concerns us here to know
Was penned within the leaves of Holy Writ.
But how can we assure us of the truth

Of these said Scriptures ? First, the men who wrote
Existed many centuries apart ;
Chosen from all grades of society.
Some shepherds, monarchs, and some fishermen ;
But though so diverse are their varied styles,
They teach the self-same truths as with one voice.
They utter forth the glorious character
Of Him who *was*, and *is*, and *still shall be*,
The Lord and Ruler of this universe.
So pure and holy, too, are their decrees,
The duties man is summoned to fulfil,
That when compared with earth-born wisdom's laws,
They shine like meteors, with a halo rare,
Which proves Divinity their parentage.

THE PROPHECIES.

Then there were prophecies which slumbered long ;
Age after age till the appointed time,
When they burst forth in action uncontrolled ;
And each diminutive, ev'ry small detail
Became a fact, a page in history.
Note the destruction of Jerusalem ;
And all her sorrows which with bitter grief
Our Lord foretold as He wept over it.
The foeman's trench encompassed her around,
And levelled all her glories low as earth ;
Her children falling lie 'midst ruined heaps,
Whilst the great temple's vast magnificence,
Polluted by the tramp of hostile feet,
Was fired, destroyed, and shattered stone from stone.

Then the abomination Daniel told,
The Roman eagle gluttoned o'er its prey.

DIVINE ATTRIBUTES.

As to the nature of the Lord our God
Much is revealed, but much is mystery ;
For finite reason ne'er can comprehend
The depths, the vastness of the Infinite.
But this we know that an Omniscient eye
Searches the workings of a sinner's soul,
Not only noting acts, but hidden thoughts.
Then God is Omnipresent, everywhere ;
He watches o'er the children of His love,
And with a hand Omnipotent He guides
Not only worlds, but insects in their course.
God is a Spirit, therefore mortal eye
Can ne'er behold Him ; were it possible,
His dazzling glory would obliterate
The sense of vision, as the midday sun
Forbids the rashness of an ardent gaze.
Like a sweet perfume which pervades the air,
Fragrant, oft pungent, yet invisible ;
So do His power and goodness reigning round
Denote His presence though Himself unseen.

GOD REIGNS IN LOVE.

He then, who formed the glories of this earth,
With all adapted to the use of man,
Surely may claim obedience from the hands
Of those whom He created, and so blessed.

And as our Father, we can but believe
That all His acts are the results of love.
What monstrous folly fills the hearts of those
Who but behold Him as an angry Judge,
Finding His pleasure in their punishment!

THE TRINITY IN UNITY.

Another myst'ry is the Trinity ;
The Holy Three whom we adore as One.
This we can never fathom, yet believe
The doctrine taught us in the Word of God ;
Hear the command from out the sacred mount :
"No other gods shalt thou obey but Me."
Again He says, "I am a jealous God,
Nor will I glory to another yield."
Yet, clearly we perceive some actions wrought,
Which testify that there are persons three ;
For each has His peculiarities ;
Yet all are equal ; all together work
Throughout creation, and redemption too ;
Though each at times appears more prominent
In some bless'd office, minist'ring to man.
Witness *the Triune at John's baptism*,
When Jesus, rising from old Jordan's tide,
(Amidst a cloud of many witnesses),
Hears from the opened heavens the Father's voice,
"This is My Son, in whom I am well pleased."
Then lo the Holy Spirit straight descends,
In form of a dove and rests upon His head.
Again :—our Saviour, ere He leaves the earth,

Tells of His journey to the Father's throne,
Whence He declares He will in mercy send
The Holy Comforter, to cheer their hearts.
Truly these facts are past the mind of man
To comprehend ; but there are things on earth
Which may afford a faint similitude.
The air we breathe, itself invisible
(Though we can feel it, when disturbed, as wind)
Can be divided into various parts.
Again :—mysterious are the rays of light,
White in their purity, but when dissolved
By prisms, many are the coloured beams ;
And chemists tell us, that each sep'rate tint
Exerts a varied influence on the earth.

MAN'S GREATNESS AND FRAILTY.

How great is man ! e'en in his fallen state
How vast his knowledge, at the present time
What wealth of wisdom has he treasured up
From ages past, in manuscript and book !
How year on year produces novelties
Some grand improvement in each range of art !
Whilst ever and anon the world itself
Is startled, by some great discovery.
The light'ning, now a slave at man's control,
Darts o'er the earth to bear his messages.
Then, what can match the mighty power of steam ?
But late an infant, now in manhood's prime ;
Bearing our vessels e'en 'gainst wind and tide ;
And giant-like, with iron arms and hands

Turning and working our machinery.
Yes, man *is* mighty, great in intellect,
Boasting his wisdom and proud excellence ;
Raising on high fair beauteous palaces,
And glorious Cathedrals, whose strength
Of massive masonry would fain defy
Even the hand of Time to overthrow.
But see ; a simple shower, a sudden chill,
A breath of noxious air inhaled unknown,
And man lies crushed, though by a feather struck,
He feels nought, yet he falls beneath the blow
Which bears him helpless to the door of death.
Now all the skill, the wisdom of the age
Is brought to succour him ; great men of note
Hold daily consultations, but, alas !
In vain, for, lo he weakens, droops, and dies !
Thus man may work his wonders on the earth,
But has no power to keep his soul in life.
Oh then, what madness to spend all one's thoughts
On this short lifetime, which must soon decay
(And *may* at *any* moment terminate) ;
And fail to grasp the certainty of hope,
The happiness which lasts eternally.

SIN, LIKE DISEASE, INHERITED.

A beauteous evening in a southern clime ;
The red sun setting o'er a distant lake ;
The blue sky cloudless ; not a breath of wind
Ruffled the water, or disturbed the leaves.
Here was a type of happiness and peace ;

But sad the aspect of a little group
Clustered around a gentle invalid,—
A lovely maiden in the bloom of youth,
But oh, how wasted ! note the hectic flush,
Full of such beauty, yet such mournfulness.
Oh sad disease, which plucks the fairest flowers ;
Which spares our treasures till their tendrils twine
Around th' affections of our deepest love ;
Then, when our happiness is at its height,
The latent evil, like a worm in bud,
Preys on the life and withered are our joys.
This fair girl, last of three, but just sixteen,
The very idol of her parents' hearts
Is fading swiftly 'fore their very eyes.
Too well they know the symptoms of decay,
Which twice have led them mourning to the tomb.
And soon will they be childless ; at the thought
The gentle mother cannot check her tears,
Which still she fain must hide beneath a smile ;
'The father, restless, rises yet again
To smoothe the pillow, or suggest some change
To please his darling ; whilst his wand'ring hand
Strays through the golden curls with fondest love.
'Tis hard to part ; to think that smiles no more
Shall greet his fond embraces ; that the kiss
At length impressed upon those loving lips
Can only meet a chilling cold response.
The thought is sad, yea it is terrible ;
His heart rebels, till faith, soft whisp'ring, sighs,
“ Lord, not my will, but let Thy will be done.”

Now for the point which this shall illustrate—
A subtle poison, call it what you may,
Has been inherited ; a num'rous race,—
Ancestors of this truly noble house,—
Tenant within their native churchyard tombs
With princely monuments ; but oh ! how sad
To note the frequency of their early graves !
Here is a family of noted worth ;
Good, kind, and generous ; beloved of all ;
Their tenants, speak of them with warmest praise ;
The poor can find no words too good for them ;
The nation also marks their noble deeds,
Their systematic charities, which find
The truly suff'ring, and relieve their needs.
Yet here is Death triumphant, cutting off
The brightest blossoms, and the fairest fruit ;
Now can we trace this as the effect of sin ?
It may be, that licentious reckless acts
Have sown the seed, whose harvest others reap ;
(The sins of fathers on their children laid,
E'en to their generations third and fourth).
But for my purpose, I must travel back
Past their forefathers, to the very first
Who broke God's law, and brought a curse on man,
Transmitting thus unto his latest heir
The taint of sin, disease, decay, and death.
Yes, all the seed of Adam droop and die ;
However bright and beautiful their lives,
Both soul and body are the heirs of death ;
For none are holy in the searching sight

Of Him, who charges e'en th' angelic hosts
With frailty, folly, needing a rebuke.
Our sinful bodies pay the penalty
In pain and sorrow, and at length in death.
But for the soul a ransom hath been found ;
The second Adam in our flesh stands forth
And works for us a glorious righteousness,
Which God in mercy willingly accepts,
Having appointed, so that we, in Christ,
Are made alive, who, through th' old Adam died ;
By whom our bodies, too, shall be redeemed,
And rescued from the power of the grave,
At that glad moment, when th' Archangel's tramp
Shall raise us, clad in immortality.

INBRED SIN.

Have you not noticed in the tiny babe
An evil tendency,—ere reason dawned,—
Ere its brief lifetime numbered many days ?
If not, behold (unseen) the gentleness
Of yon young mother, beautiful and good :
Mark with what care she doats upon her babe,
Forgetting self ; her being seems absorbed
In love, devotion, and fond tenderness.
But see (though causeless, though its warm and fed)
The little tyrant bursts into a cry
Of angry passion, dashing out its hands
With sobs which will not soon be pacified.
And why ? because some trinket is removed
Whose angled sharpness might abrade his mouth.

Ah ! there you'll see the signs of inbred sin,
The old man's nature (Adam's) in us wrought.

GOOD WORKS.

Now some there are who feel and own their sin,
Mourning past evil deeds with bitterness ;
Yet think to work out their salvation. They
Are zealous of good works in ev'ry form ;
They fast ; they pray ; and they afflict their souls
With heavy penances ; but yet they feel
Their burden heavy ; crushing to despair.
Now God declares "The soul that sins shall die ;
That all have sinned and are of glory void ;
That ev'ry angry, impure thought shall reap
A recompense," its meed of punishment.
Yea, ev'ry idle, evil word is sin ;
And by their words shall mankind be condemned
Being unholy ; if good, justified.
Oh, who is then sufficient for these things ?
What man can stand before the searching eye
Which tries each thought, the throbbings of the heart,
And not o'erwhelmed with sorrow at his guilt
Fall prostrate, crying out from depth of soul
"Have mercy, Lord ; for oh, my sins are great ?"
Were we to lead henceforth a spotless life
What would absolve us from the dreadful debt
Of past transgressions,—all the faults of youth,
And darker failings of maturer years ?
Before our eyes were startled by the fact,
That o'er our heads hung an avenging sword

Which any moment might descend and bring
A dark eternity of endless woe,
Not only have we broken all the laws
Of God our Maker, but have left undone
Unnumbered duties, which alike demand
From holy justice a due punishment.
Besides, the word of God plainly declares
That none are righteous, not a single man,
His heart is evil and continues so :
Our Saviour said, "There's no one good but God."

ALL HAVE SINNED.

Mark all the brightest Scripture characters,
Who though renowned for wisdom, strong in faith,
Had still, alas! their noted blemishes.
David, beloved, the man of God's own heart ;
Fell sadly, and was sorely punished :
The meek and gentle Moses also erred,
Speaking, in anger, words which forfeited
His hope of entrance to the Promised Land :
The great Elijah faints, and weakly flies
Before the rage of furious Jezebel :
Then Abraham, the man of mighty faith
Who e'en was ready to destroy his son
At God's command, yielded to falsehood base,
And said—"She is my sister, not my wife ;"
Fearing the despot and distrusting God.
Yea, the experience of earth's noblest men
Has been a mourning sense of present sin.
St. Paul, a man of holiness and grace,

Cries, 'neath the burden of oppressing guilt,
"Oh, wretch I am, who shall deliver me
From this vile body which o'erpowers me?"
Further: he says that by the deeds of law
Shall no man in God's sight be justified;
That 'tis by faith alone that we can live.
God ne'er expected we could keep the law,
(But had we done so we had entered life)
Then why enact a law when none had power
To yield obedience, but are prone to slight?
Which even stirs up a rebellious mind
That hates control, and loves itself to please.
First: God Himself is holiness so pure,
That He can tolerate in us no less
Than perfect truth, obedience, and love;
Then: He would lead us through our nothingness,
Our emptiness of merit, and defects,
To seek for pardon and acceptance in
The only way His wond'rous grace has given,—
The merits of His own beloved Son.
But how can we appropriate this gift—
This matchless bounty of redeeming love?
How shall we make this glorious prize our own,—
Whose blessings last for ever, bearing fruit
Of peace and joy throughout eternity?
What saith the Scriptures? Let us search and see
How others gained this glorious happiness.

FAITH.

When suddenly aroused by earthquake's shock
Which shook and loosened all the dungeon bars,

The jailor at Philippi drew his sword,
And would have killed himself having the fear
That whilst he slept the pris'ners had escaped :
The voice of Paul arrested him, who cried,
"Harm not thyself, for all are present here."
Then o'er his soul a joyful thankfulness
Stole gently, with the sudden heaven-born thought—
Perchance these holy men can solve the doubts
Which long have weighed a burden on my soul.
A light he called for ; then he prostrate fell,
A humble suppliant at th' Apostles' feet,
Crying aloud with heartfelt earnestness,
"What must I do, Sirs, that I may be saved ?"
Oh, matchless question ! which the world should ask
And note the answers bless'd simplicity—
"Only believe in the Lord Jesus Christ,
And there's salvation for thyself and house."
No works, no duties, and no penances
Are first demanded ; there is nought to pay.
The gift of God is gratis—without price ;
Salvation's free to all, who will receive
A pardon wrought in God's appointed way.

EXAMPLE OF FAITH.

Some weeks have passed since home-bound, late at
night,
I hurried through a long and narrow street ;
When lo, a cry,—the awful cry of " Fire !"
Startled the quiet of the midnight hour ;
And forth from out a lower casement, streamed
Dense volumes, suddenly, of flame and smoke.

Ere long the engines rattled down with speed ;
But not before the house was all a glow,
And like a furnace were the lower rooms—
Darting forth showers of sparks, and burning flakes.
“Have all escaped?” I heard a fireman cry ;
“Are *all* the lofts employed as warehouses?”
Such was the opinion of the neighbourhood,
When lo, a man pressed battling through the crowd,
And cried with anguish, “Oh, my boy, my boy!”
And from the topmost window there appeared
A tiny figure ; high, beyond relief.
No fire-escape as yet had reached the spot,
And now the house may any moment fall ;
The crowd draws back ; it was an awful scene,
To watch and see that pretty innocent
Who ere long *must* be choked, or burned to death.
The father calls aloud, “My boy, my boy !
Spring from the window ; jump into my arms,
And I will save you !” but the little one
Cried (as th’ excited crowd a moment hushed),
“I dare not father ; oh, it is *so* far.”
“Jump ! jump ! my boy, or it will be too late ;
The walls are cracking and the fire ascends !”
“But I can’t see you father, all is smoke ;
And oh, I feel I cannot jump enough.”
“Then only leave your hold of all around ;
Fall without fear, for I can see you still ;
And now my arms are wide outstretched to save.”
The child had never found his father false,
So closed his eyes, relinquishing the grasp

Of all self-trust, and in a moment, safe
Was pressed with rapture to his father's heart.
This, then, is *faith*; our works and our good deeds
Must be relinquished ; these but keep us back
From God's rich mercy, which alone is given
To those who seek it with an empty hand,
Giving Him all the credit for His grace.
In earthly matters, rob mankind of trust
In one another's words and promises,
And all transactions fail, and a dead block
Obstructs the course of all their businesses.
Faith must be daily, hourly, exercised ;
Though oft we pay dear for our confidence.
We take a cheque, as value for our goods,
And reckon that we hold in hand the cash ;
When lo, on presentation, 'tis a fraud,—
A forgery, and we must bear the loss.
Man to his fellow oft too blindly trusts,
Not only power o'er property, but life ;
The patient, trusting to the surgeon's skill,
Parts with all power and sense 'neath chloroform,—
And leaves his body to the glitt'ring knife
Which chance may cure, or else effect his death.
How foolish, then, is man, who hesitates
To place his trust in one infallible,
Whose word is certain ; who has but to speak
And all the powers of nature straight obey ;
Whose promises and threatenings, too, have been
Fulfilled, and crowd each page of history.
Trust, then, in God, and on His love rely,

And He will grant thee all thy heart's desires ;
Stretch forth the hand of earnest steadfast faith,
And He will give thee pardon, life, and peace.
He that spared not His own beloved Son,
But gave Him up a ransom for us all,
Delights to see the joy that Saviour feels
When He receives a sinner to His breast,—
The price and payment of His agonies.
Thus are the hopes of Godhead realised ;
Whilst angels in the blue expanse of Heaven
Strike fresh their harps in overflowing joy,
With praise to Him, who died that we might live.

HOLINESS.

But is there nothing to be felt or done ?
No preparation, ere we dare approach
The presence of the just and holy God ?
Must we not mourn our aggravated sins ?
And by good deeds atone for errors past ?
Say not the Scriptures without holiness
None may appear before the Great Most High ?
Yea, truly Heaven is purity itself,
Without a taint of evil, error, sin ;
Its sacred precincts are for ever barred
From all defiling agents ; and our God
Demands from all His creatures perfectness.
A heart submissive, full obedience.
But who, alas ! is equal to these things—
Can work out what God can alone accept ?
Proud, boasting man has tried the experiment.

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But ever failed in its accomplishment.
So God in mercy shews the only way,
Through which we e'er can hope for holiness.
And offers us the glorious, spotless robe
Of Christ, who wrought a perfect righteousness.
Now those who grasp the wondrous blessedness
Of sins forgiven through redeeming blood,
Stand forth accepted ; and the searching eye
Of Deity itself can find no flaw ;
For they are clad, not in a mortal garb,
But in the holiness of God (His Son's).
Then overflows their raptured hearts and souls,
With boundless gratitude and fervent love
To Him who suffered in their guilty stead.
And now they joy in works of righteousness,
Counting all earthly sacrifice as nought,
Rejoicing even in distress and woe
Endured for Him, who loved them to the death.
Thus to the new-born sin has lost its charm ;
They view now with abhorrence past delights ;
And wonder how they could have risked their souls
For such frail pleasures, such vain fleeting joys ;
And power is given them, by the Spirit's aid,
To work out fitting acts of holiness.

ELECTION.

Now some will say, " But does not God elect
Those He will save, and those He will destroy ?
Then, if elected, I shall surely live,
Whate'er I do, if otherwise, I die."

Now God knew all things from the very first,
And holds o'er all unlimited control ;
So that all nature must obey His will,
Not only things inanimate, but man ;
For though His hand lies hid behind a cloud,
He who was recognised in ages past,
As surely governs now the universe.
But there are workings which the Lord permits
In His own wisdom (to us fathomless,
Beyond our reason's power to comprehend) ;
Such as the reign of Satan, and of sin,
Which though they seem to militate
Against His honour, yet He still restrains
The word which could all evil terminate.
Our God, fore-knowing all that e'er shall be—
Our deeds, and thoughts, and that some will rebel—
Permits it, though He mourns our waywardness ;
Plies us with words of loving argument ;
Sends forth His prophets to reveal His will,
And warn us of hell's awful miseries ;
Yea, all that can be said or done He tries,
Yet will not force us 'gainst our own free will.
The Saviour said, " Ye will not come to me
" That I might give you everlasting life."
Think of the man who dared to argue thus
In things of earth, " No, I am not elect
To earn a living, so I shall not try ;
For if I am elected I shall gain
A sure subsistence, and without fatigue."
Now such a one most would proclaim a fool ;

When if they would apply the argument,
They'd see that God had long before decreed
All the minutest acts of providence.
Thus each success and failure in our lives
Has been foreknown. Yet there are certain laws
In nature, which are given us to obey
In furtherance of all desired results :—
We yield obedience,—and a blessing gain ;
Rebel,—and swiftly follows punishment.
St. Peter on this point doth well advise,
That men should strive to make election sure
By seeking for salvation, through the way
Of God's appointment ; that is, through His Son ;
But can we tell if we are heirs of grace ?
Our names inscribed within the book of life ?
Elect of God to happiness and peace ?
Yea truly ; for the citizens of heaven
Are well described within the sacred page.
God's book on earth reveals His book above ;
Our Saviour says, " Ye will not come to me,
But whosoever is willing, let him take
The waters freely of eternal life."
Are you then willing is the test ; if so
Your loving Father has inclined your heart,
And drawn the prodigal within His arms ;
Elected long ere morning stars shone forth,
But in these latter days made manifest.

SALVATION.

Now let us dwell upon the glorious theme
Of man's redemption ; trace it to its source,

And wond'ring, worship with adoring love
The grace which snatched us from the jaws of hell.
God's justice noting all man's sinfulness,
Unsheathed its sword for righteous punishment
Of rebels, who had broken every law ;
When love appearing, shewed a gracious plan ;
By which the Judge, now fully satisfied,
Can yield to mercy and the victims save.
Now He who framed all laws, can modulate
Every minutiae, as His wisdom sees
Is best for working its development ;
And He alone whose right it is to reign,
Could find the means by which law's satisfied ;
(Yea, even by obedience magnified),
And man may now approach, through holiness
Imputed, wrought by Christ, our substitute.
We therefore trace Salvation to the grace
Of the Triune, the Undivided Three,
Who in the council held ere time began
Ordained our rescue, knowing we should fall.
When man was first created he was pure ;
Made like to God, in image and in mind ;
But yielding to the tempter's power he fell,
Sinking ere long to depths of vilest sin,
Without a hope, or power to extricate
His forfeit soul from darkness and despair.
Now God declares the soul that sins shall die ;
He also claims a perfect holiness,
And the fulfilment of His ev'ry law,
Which failing, there remains a dreadful curse

An endless woe, a fearful punishment.
The world was so beloved of God, He gave
To die for us His own begotten Son ;
That whosoever should on Him believe
Might have full pardon through the atoning blood.
Here, here is joy ; the sinner on the brink
Of endless woe, springs up in ecstasy :
For Christ appears, and offers in his stead
To bear the punishment. He also works
A perfect righteousness which God accepts
And now in Him all are accounted just,
Who trust in Jesus as their substitute,
Their' pains and penalties have been endured,
And justice were unjust, to claim again
A debt, when ransom has been fully paid.

ILLUSTRATION.

A heathen despot wise beyond his age,
Framed laws to rule his kingdom in the east ;
Enforced by fear of direful punishments.
Mongst others lately was enacted one
To check the growth of an increasing crime,
Whose penalty was awful ;—loss of sight.
The culprit was to forfeit both his eyes,
By torture, suff'ring pains most horrible ;
Alas ! the first to fall into the sin
Was the King's favourite, and darling son,—
His heir,—successor to a mighty throne ;
And now the royal heart with anguish torn
Is sore bewildered ; death it were to strike,

To blind, and torture his beloved boy.
But justice stern reigned in that father's heart,
And fought and wrestled 'gainst his tender love.
At length the day of judgment : and the law
Is read before the cowering culprit's face,
Who falls imploring mercy, but in vain.
The sentence dooms him, and one eyeball's torn
From out its socket. Oh ! what agony
Darts through each nerve like streams of liquid fire !
But far more terrible the madd'ning thought
Of endless blindness,—now to gaze the last
On all earth's beauties and the glorious sun
And then to sink to darkness, nothingness !
'Tis horrible : exceeding e'en the pain ;
But see ! the cruel hands at signal stay :
Has then the father judge relented ? no !
Two eyes are forfeited ; but hark ! he calls
And orders them to tear away his own,
Thus giving one to justice and his son.
So was the law's claim fully satisfied,
Though mercy saved the culprit by its love.
What were the feelings of this erring youth
One may conjecture. First, what boundless love
Would flow to him, who suffered in his stead ;
Sharing, thus sparing from the greater woe
Of total blindness ! Well he knew before
His father loved him ; but the full extent
He ne'er had fathomed. Then what tenderness
And what obedience to his slightest word ;
For life, his scarce breathed wishes will be law !

Next, what abhorrence would possess his soul
Of that foul sin which wrought this misery !
Again, what pride would fire his manly heart
Pondering o'er the justice, rectitude,
Which reigned triumphant in his father's breast.

GOD'S MERCY.

Such is our God ; stern justice, holiness,
And purity, like jewels deck His crown.
He cannot pardon unavenged, the least
Of our transgressions ; for Himself hath said
"The soul that sins shall die," but lo, the judge
Has other gems and brilliants, which adorn
His diadem, and these more brightly shine
When placed beside His other attributes.
Our God is also love, is merciful,
Full of compassion, ready to forgive ;
He hath no pleasure in a sinner's death,
But finds a ransom : who can cavil then
When He who makes law, bears the punishment ?
For God, in Christ, wrought for us righteousness,
And suffered too the just for the unjust ;
Hail then redemption ! hail the glorious truth !
Our crimes are expiated, *we* are free

OUR DEBTS PAID.

A tale is told of Luther, who in sleep
Beheld the devil (the accuser) near ;
Who held before his eyes a lengthened scroll,
A list of his transgressions ; for each line

Revealed some fault, some deed of hidden guilt
Committed by him, though in part forgot.
“There,” cries the fiend, “is proof that you are mine;
Yea, sin enough to sink a world to hell.”
“True,” replied Luther, “’tis a vast account,
And with remorse I own thy charges just,
So sign my name; but see the debt is paid !”
For lo, across the whole a scarlet line;
The blood of Christ has cleansed from ev’ry sin.

PRAYER.

Prayer? wherefore pray when each unuttered thought
Is known to God, and ev’ry secret want
Has been provided for us ere we felt
A sense of need. Surely He reigns too high
To bow and listen to *our* trifling words;
What saith the scriptures? after promises
Of blessings to His favoured Israel:
“Yet for these things they shall enquire of me.”
“Ask and receive, so shall your joy be full.”
“In times of danger cry, and I will hear.”
“Before they call, to them I will attend,
And whilst they’re speaking I will send reply.”
Thus men should pray, and there are mercies given
In answer; love we not our little ones,
And grant them all they need without request?
But when, on dawn of reason, they can ask,
How great our pleasure in bestowing gifts.
We love to feel they trust in us, and seek
Our favours as a bounty, not a right.

The prayer, if fervent, of a righteous man
Availeth much, and bringeth its reward ;
So Moses prayed and saved the sinful host,
When God commanded him to stand aside
Ere he destroyed them ; there on bended knee
He interceded, till his cry was heard,—
Was answered,—and his people's sin forgiven.
When Saul of Tarsus, blinded by the light,
Was led by hand within Damascus' wall,
His proud soul overpowered, and sore perplexed,
Wrung from him words of bitter agony ;
Pardon he craved for all his errors past
And guidance for the future. Then from heaven
An angel swiftly with an answer flies,
And this intelligence " Behold he prays."
King Hezekiah heard the fatal word
That he must die ; but at his earnest prayer,
God granted him another term of years.
A band of Christians, overwhelmed with grief,
Are supplicating for a friend's release ;
And lo ! there's Peter knocking at the gate.
Our God thus proves—what He has claimed to be—
The Hearer and the Answerer of prayer.
Now what is prayer ? In what does it consist ?
Is it an eloquent and fluent speech,
The repetition of a perfect creed,
Said decorously, and upon our knees ?
Can the most High delight in num'rous words ?
(Full reckoning, counted by a string of beads).
Nay, prayer is something deeper, more intense,

And words are but its means of utterance,
Sometimes unneeded, and at times too poor
To echo thoughts which throng the lab'ring heart.
God is a Spirit, so with rev'rence all
Must bow before Him ; and all wand'ring thoughts
Should be restrained, as first with thankfulness.
You praise His loving kindness in the past ;
Then with submission to His holy will
Bring your petitions ; nothing is too small,
If you require it, for to Him our needs
When greatest are but trivial ; and alike
As easy to bestow ; but *earnestness*
Must show the value set on its receipt.
We also must believe that God has power
To aid in all things, and at every time ;
Then must we wait with patience His response,
By constant supplication drawing down
A suited answer to our strong desires ;
Yet coupling each petition with the thought
If 'tis thy will, if not, thy will be done.
Then shall we reap a wond'rous recompense,
Greater than tongue can tell, or heart conceive ;
And though our intercessions may not meet,
Results anticipated, yet for us
Our Father will provide still better things :
'Tis sometimes greater mercy to withhold,
Than grant to erring mortals their requests.
If the Almighty recognises thought,
An upward glance to Him is deemed a prayer ;
A sigh of penitence, shall reach His throne

And words *unuttered*, wield as mighty power
As eloquent and studied sentences ;
For prayer's the breathing of the inmost heart ;
Communion of the very soul with God.

OUR DELIVERER.

Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear
A Son to God,—the Lord Immanuel ;
God in our nature ; He is truly man,
And yet Divine ; our human frame consists
Of flesh and spirit ; His alike of flesh,
But lo, His spirit is the Deity
From heaven descended. Holy mystery.
He 'herits not the taint of Adam's sin,
But shines forth perfect, full of righteousness ;
His deeds of love, of purity, and grace
Delight His Father, and a voice declared,
“ This is my Son in whom I am well pleased.”
A law to man was given unto life
On full obedience. Christ obeyed the law ;
His bitter enemies could ne'er convict
Him even of a ceremonial sin ;
They tried to trap Him, even in His words,
Despairing of a frailty in His life.
Now as this righteousness was wrought by *man*,
And in our stead, 'tis placed to our account.
But how about the penalties incurred
By past transgressions ? Hear the gracious words
Of blood bought pardon and redeeming love :—
“ Behold the Lamb of God who bears our guilt.”

“ Made sin for us the only sinless one.”
“ On Him was laid the iniquity of all.”
Had *Christ* been sinful He for *self* had died ;
But being holy, He can give Himself
A ransom for His people, and atone
For all transgressions ; for a lamb Divine
Is richer offering, a far greater gift
To justice, than a hetacomb of men.
To His atonement ev’ry sacrifice
Of Moses pointed ; ever flowing blood
Reminded Israel that yet incomplete
Was all their worship ; then the prophet’s voice
Foretold the Great Deliv’rer who should die
To save His people from the power of hell.
Throughout all Scripture flows this vital truth,—
Remission only, at the price of blood ;
For in the blood consists the life of man,
The life by His transgressions forfeited.

THE SCAPEGOAT.

The scapegoat, also formed a striking type
Of a Redeemer, standing in our place ;
(After a victim slain and sprinkled blood)
The High Priest lays hands on the creature’s head
Confessing all the congregation’s sins,
Which now are laid upon their substitute ;
A fitting man then bears it far away
Into a trackless, boundless wilderness,
As blotted out from mem’ry and from God.
All this throws light upon the promises ;—

“Your sins I’ll cast them all behind my back.
They shall be buried in the ocean’s depths,
To be remembered ’gainst your souls no more.”
God so loved man He gave His only Son,
Who, by His suff’rings on th’ accursed tree
Bore all our griefs ; whilst through His heavy stripes
Our souls are healed ; He died that we might live.

ILLUSTRATION OF PARDON.

The youth was wilful ; like the prodigal
He left the home of virtue and of love ;
Forsook his widowed mother, mocked her woe,
And with companions dissolute and wild,
Nigh broke the heart whose gentle tenderness
Had watched o’er him, long ere he knew the need
Of love and care. Oh, what ingratitude !
And now with tears and sobs of bitterness,
She wearies Heaven with her large requests
For his repentance, and a safe return.
The cup of vice he finds has noisome dregs,
Remorse and anguish, want, disease, yea death
Itself is hov’ring near the guilty boy,
With none to cheer him, no soft gentle hand
To smooth his pillow, and supply his needs.
He would return, but shame and want of strength
Retain him prisoner ; but the mother hears
The tale of suff’ring, and on wings of love
Flies to his rescue, pardons all the past,
And trusts his honour for the time to come.
Thus is the sinner saved ; by mercy won ;

For God delights not in his woe, his death,—
But follows him with trials, which may turn
His wayward steps to happiness and peace.
Like as a father, His all-pitying eye
Regards His children, and delights to bless.
“What made these lines, these scars, which spoil
your hands?”

A little girl with mournful eyes enquires ;
“I’ve longed to know, but dared not ask before.”
“My darling child,” the mother cried, and pressed
Her fondly to her heart ; “your bed was fired,
And through the blinding smoke and rising flame
I had to force my arms to rescue thee.”
And have we not a Friend whose pierced hands
Were stretched to save us from the flames of hell ?
Oh, matchless love ! no sudden impulse, but
The aim and object of a human life.

THE DEITY OF CHRIST.

But there are some who think to worship God,
And yet deny our Saviour’s Deity ;
They own His life was perfect ; wondrous pure
A bright example ; but they basely rob
Him of His heavenly ancestry ; and say
He was but man, a being like themselves.
They overlook, or twist, the plainest proofs,
Which may be found on ev’ry Scripture page ;
His birth was most mysterious, and the babe
Was called “that holy thing,” from parentage
Divine, derived not from our evil race.

The prophets, too, declared that He should be
The Wonderful Emmanuel, (God with us,)
The Counsellor, and the Almighty God,
The Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

If we say we have sinned not, we deceive
Ourselves, and contradict the words of God,—
“That all have erred, and strayed like wand’ring
sheep ;

Alike unholy, there is not one good.”

Yet Christ declares, before the assembled Jews,
That no one can convince His soul of sin ;
Of Him ’twas said, that He was free from guile,
A Lamb without a blemish or a spot ;
Sure sign of deity is holiness.

The tree is known by all its precious fruits ;
The voice from Heaven approved and owned the Son,
And Jesus claimed close unity with God,—

“I and my Father are but one, and he
Who doth behold Me doth the Father see.”

He ne’er declined the holy rev’rence due
To Deity alone ; though blasphemy
The ignorant rulers deemed His startling claim
Of right to sit upon the throne of heaven.

In the beginning was the Word (our Lord),
And by Him all things were created ; He
Formed the vast planets, hurled them into space ;
Then made frail man to creep upon this earth.

In Him there dwelt a self existing life,
Without beginning, and without an end.

But as to His incarnate frame, he said,

"I've power to lay it down, and power to raise
It up again ; no man can take my life."
Again He tells us of a judgment day,
When He shall sever (like the sheep from goats),
The saints from sinners ; when His glance of fire
Omniscient shall pierce ev'ry subterfuge,
And drive the evil to eternal shame.
Can this be only man ? Oh ! madmen, pause,
And kiss the Son before His anger burns,
And ye all perish worthily condemned,
For having sinned 'gainst knowledge, and 'gainst
light.

Want ye more proofs ? Then, search the prophecies,
Which trace His history from birth to death ;
And you will see the Deity shine forth
In holy radiance, like the rising sun.
Note then the miracles ; was it e'er known
That one could open eyes of men born blind ?
Could walk on waves ? and still the tempest's power ?
The dead, obedient to His word, came forth,
And at His touch diseases disappeared,
(Yea, even leprosy—that cureless ill).
And lo the devils felt a present God,
And prayed for pity, crying, " Art Thou come
To cast us into torment 'fore the time ? "

THE LAST DAY.

Now let us dwell a while with bated breath,
Upon an awful, startling mystery.
The day of trembling, terror, and dismay,

E

The day of joy and holy ecstasy.
All shall not die ; all will not need a grave ;
For Christ shall come soon, unexpectedly,
To call the nations to His judgment bar.
Oh ! day of sorrow to the thoughtless ones,
Who, horror struck, shall call on rocks to fall
And hide them from the presence of their God.
As in the days of Noah, though warning's given,
Men eat, and drink, marry, enjoy this life,
Despising counsel, full of unbelief ;
Till in a moment retribution comes :
Time's ended, and eternity's begun.
Yea, suddenly, e'en as a midnight thief
Comes unawares, our Lord shall hasten down,
With sound of trumpet and a might host
Of angels, and the spirits of the blessed,
Too late, then, preparation, for the doors
Of Gospel grace shall close with awful crash,
Driving delaying sinners to despair,
(Who meant, sometime, to seek their peace with
God).

The Bridegroom's come, and the assembled guests
Rejoice with him, but in the outward dark
The foolish virgins grope with lightless lamps.
" Seek ye the Lord whilst yet he may be found ;
Call ye upon Him while he yet is near ;
And let the wicked man forsake his way,
Turning to God, and he shall mercy find."
Oh ! solemn moment, when th' archangels trump
(A thrilling blast) shall quicken slumb'ring dust .

And distant atoms with magnetic force
Shall congregate to form a human frame.
When in a moment bone shall fly to bone ;
And sinews stretch, uniting limb to limb,
And flesh immortal drapes the glorious whole.
At the creation, earth supplied the clay
Our heavenly Potter moulded into man ;
(Frail dust he was and unto dust returned.)
Now God who made him also has the power
To recreate, and as He breathed and poured
Into our nostrils first the breath of life,
And man became a living soul ; so now
Each ransomed spirit at His word descends,
Reanimates its former earthly frame,
(Now changed and beautified, yea glorified,)
And rises in the air to greet his Lord.
Then we His saints, who still on earth remain
Alive to witness all these glorious scenes,
Shall feel a transformation,—mighty change,—
This mortal clothed with immortality.
Our bodies, freed from ev'ry earthly stain !
Our spirits, full of joy and ecstasy !
Our souls, no longer chained, adoring rise
To Him who loved and washed us in His blood ;
The ransomed spirit lending joyous wings
To bear the body up, with raptured gaze
To see His face, and rest upon His love :
Then shall we be for ever with the Lord ;
But for the wicked what has Heaven decreed ?
How speak the Scriptures of tha awful day ?

St. Peter tells us that the earth itself
Is stored with fire, which at that day let loose
Shall burn the world, consuming all its works ;
That all things by the heat shall be dissolved ;
(The elements themselves shall fuse and melt,)
Till of earth's beauty there shall nought remain
But one vast molten, red, chaotic mass,
Appearing as in pre-Adamic days,
'Fore re-creation,—“ without form and void.”
Still this is not the end of man ; his soul
Immortal shall outlive a world in flames,
For there is yet a furnace in the depths
Of hell, of sevenfold fury there prepared
For devils and their victims, who prefer
Such service and such wages to their God's.

THE JUDGMENT.

Behold the last assize ; the great white throne
Of judgment set ; the book of life unrolled,
In which the names of all the justified
Are written, with the blood of Calvary ;
To them remains no condemnation, they
Are washed, accepted, in the well-beloved.
But all whose names are blotted out must stand
Self-murd'ers, self-condemned ; for, lo ! a space
Was made for all, for each, yea, every one,
Which they rejected ; and the blood of Christ
Deemed an unholy and a worthless thing.
What deep dismay shall seize on ev'ry heart,
What anguish and remorse, yea, what despair ;

As from the lips of Him who died to save
They hear their sentence,—“Cursed ones depart.”
Christ like the sun is source of life and light ;
Nearness to Christ shall form the raptured bliss
Of ransomed spirits ; and as they arrive,
Closer still closer, shall their happiness
Receive a fresh accession of delight.
Thus through eternity, increasing joy
Shall be the portion of His holy ones.
But all the wicked, driven by His breath
Farther and farther from the realms of bliss,
Shall gnash their teeth in utter bitterness,
As sudden blasts of anguish and despair
Enshroud them in an atmosphere of woe ;
The infernal gates bear writ in words of fire,
“All who here enter bid farewell to hope.”
The slippery sides of the remorseless pit
Affords no graspings to arrest descent ;
And none can climb that terrible abyss ;
Deeper and deeper they for ever sink :—
That awful fiery pit is bottomless.

ETERNITY.

Yet some assert, that endless punishment
Is limited ; that heavenly mercy ne’er
Intended, or *could* doom a human soul
To so much woe, despair, and misery.
They would persuade us, that each one at length
Shall safe emerge from the devouring flames,
And fly to Heaven, to happiness, and bliss.

'Tis not in Scripture, for there God declares
The everlasting torment of the lost ;
The same word which denotes the vast extent
Of glorious joy, measures alike the woe
Of the condemned ones ; everlasting life,—
The bliss of saints ; and everlasting death—
The due reward of the impenitent.
True, God is love, but He is justice too ;
Nor will He fail His word in either case ;
Vain are the hopes of purifying fires,
To purge the souls of sinners from their sins.
Amongst the devils will they learn to hate
Their evil ways, and lead a holy life ?
Will not the filthy there be filthy still ?
Besides, alas ! there is a mighty gulf
Which none can traverse, placed 'twixt hell and
Heaven.

Oh ! woe to those who lure unwary souls
To their perdition through such hopes as these ;
Better to warn to flee the wrath to come,
Where the worm dieth not (of fell remorse)
Nor is the fire of anguish ever quenched.
This hell of torment was ne'er made for man,
But for the Devil and his troop of fiends ;
Dwell on the horror of such company ;
Think of their rage and fury, as the pangs,—
Long dreaded pangs of ages burst on them,
For which in darkness they've been long enchained
Until their time appointed ; how their wrath
Will vent itself upon their victim man ;

Thinking to irritate the Deity,
By malice wreaked upon poor stolen souls,
Who else had formed rich trophies to His grace.
In thought I counted all the grains of sand
On ev'ry seaboard ; then each tiny shell ;
Next drops of ocean, and of mountain streams ;
But these were little for my purpose, so
I added further leaves of varied trees ;
Each blade of grass, and ev'ry twinkling star ;
Thus forming a vast mighty aggregate
Which He alone could truly calculate,
Who knows each thought and numbers all our hairs ;
Then for each item, I imagined years ;
And tried to grasp a full eternity.
Now, God has numbered earth's allotted days ;
His hand created, and His hand dissolves—
But knowing neither youth or day of birth,
He cannot reckon ages which have run
In His existence ; neither can He count
The future eras (they're uncountable).
His days are likened to our thousand years,
And having no beginning, have no end.
Thus, when each grain of sand is fully run,
The mighty waters flowed by, drop by drop,
The wind has scattered ev'ry fallen leaf,
And e'en the stars exhausted cease to shine,
Still shall eternity, untired, roll on,
The lifetime of our God, and also man's.
If then our earthly days at best are few,
Swiftly departing as a weaver's thread ;

And after comes the contrast, oh ! how vast
'Twixt endless joy and endless misery !
How should we ponder o'er our Saviour's words,
Who shews the madness, proves the gain but loss
When men win all things parting with their souls ?

RITUALISM.

Now, what is ritualism ? 'Tis a word
That many would be puzzled to define.
Is it another term for ordinance ;
The dec'rous form of worship and of dress,
In which a mortal should approach his God.
Under the law of Moses, gorgeous robes
Decked, the high priest, of scarlet, purple, white,
And gold entwined with many a precious stone ;
Whilst glorious was the sacred furniture,
The altar, and the golden mercy seat.
Now each *minutia* was divinely planned,
Containing hidden some significance
Of heavenly doctrine, or some sacred truth ;
And Moses, to the letter, carried out
Instructions given him on the holy mount.
He instituted varied sacrifice,
And by repeated bloodshedding for sin,
Shewed the atonement through a substitute.
The types and shadows of the law, St. Paul
Likens to lessons taught us in the schools ;
Emblems to lead us to lay hold of Christ ;
But when faith came, we had no longer need
Of our schoolmaster ; for the substance far

Outshines the shadow, which, like prophecy,
Must fade away, when the fulfilment comes.
When Jesus cried "'Tis finished," lo! the veil
Was rent in twain, and the most holy place
Within the temple was revealed to all ;
Shewing that now, by Christ, the true high priest,
An entrance had been made for us to heaven.
His death exhausted num'rous prophecies,
And His great sacrifice, the Jewish types ;
So laws and ceremonials passed away
(No more on Gentile proselytes enforced),
And Jews and Greeks may now alike receive
Peace through that offering, given once for all.
Our God complained of Israel, that with lips
Alone they honoured Him ; their hearts the while
Being far removed ; that vainly worshipped they,
Teaching for doctrines, the commands of men :
" Thus ye reject the ordinance of heaven
By your traditions (the ideas of man),
Your outward purities of washing cups
And hands, I heed not ; but the inner life
Made clean ; the secret chambers of your souls,
And worship Me in spirit and in truth."

FORMS OF WORSHIP.

Men through their frailty need some outer form,
When in a body they approach their God,
A leader, who shall guide their thoughts in prayer,
Their voice in praise, explain the word of life,
And give sweet counsel leading unto peace.

But there's a danger : many rest in *form*,
Thinking there's value in an ordinance,
A charm in sacraments, a good deed done
By lengthened worship, which must merit grace.
Now, through a parable, our Lord declares
Who in His sight exhibits righteousness.
The Pharisee prayed with the outer voice,
Gave tithes, and fasted, acted out the law
As he imagined ; but the publican,
With down cast eyes, and tears of penitence,
Cried but for mercy, and was justified.
Yes ! 'tis the utt'rance of the heart, not lips,
Alone which mounts to heaven and meets response.
Oft, gorgeous rites prove fatal hind'rances
To heavenly worship, chaining souls to earth,
The fancy's pleased, but the heart's untouched.



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